

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 DHA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-07 L-03 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /079 W
-----070981 261437Z /43

O 261418Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7700
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 14314

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV, OVIP (YOUNG, ANDREW), RH, UK, US
SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS ON OWEN-YOUNG MISSION

1. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF STORY ON OWEN-YOUNG MISSION
APPEARING IN AUGUST 26 "TIMES". STORY IS DATED
SALISBURY AUGUST 25 "FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT". SIMILAR
STORIES ALSO APPEAR IN "TELEGRAPH" AND "GUARDIAN".

2. BEGIN TEXT: THERE HAS BEEN A COLD RECEPTION FROM
THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT FOR WHAT ARE SAID TO BE THE
MAIN POINTS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS FOR A CON-
STITUTIONAL SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA.

MR. MARK PARTRIDGE, THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, SAID
THIS EVENING THAT ANY SUGGESTION THAT THE ARMED FORCES
SHOULD BE DISBANDED WAS "TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE" TO THE
GOVERNMENT. THE IDEA THAT THEY SHOULD BE MERGED WITH
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AFRICAN NATIONALIST GUERRILLA FORCES OR THAT THEY SHOULD
BE REPLACED BY SOME PEACEKEEPING FORCE WAS EQUALLY OUT
OF THE QUESTION.

SPEAKING IN A RADIO INTERVIEW MR. PARTRIDGE SAID:
"I DON'T BELIEVE THAT ANY BRITISH SETTLEMENT PROPOSALS
WILL PROVE TO BE ACCEPTABLE."
THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSALS WERE LEAKED BY

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SOURCES TO AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS ATTENDING THE ANTI-APARTHEID CONFERENCE IN LAGOS THIS WEEK.

IN ESSENCE THEY ARE SAID TO BE: MR. SMITH TO STEP DOWN FROM POWER; BRITAIN TO APPOINT AN ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL; ELECTIONS TO TAKE PLACE ON A BASIS OF UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL NATIONALIST GROUPS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE BRITISH ADMINISTRATION; THE EXISTING RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES TO BE DISBANDED AND THE GUERRILLA FORCES DISARMED WITH A NEW SECURITY FORCE BEING FORMED BY THE NEWLY ELECTED BLACK MAJORITY GOVERNMENT; THE DEAL TO BE SUPPORTED BY A \$1,000M (570M POUNDS) DEVELOPMENT FUND PROVIDED FROM UNITED STATES AND EUROPEAN SOURCES; AND INCENTIVES TO PERSUADE WHITE RHODESIANS TO STAY.

THESE ELEMENTS CONTAIN NO SURPRISES. THEY CLOSELY RESEMBLE THE DETAILS OF THE PLAN AS THEY HAVE ALREADY BECOME KNOWN PIECE BY PIECE AND TO WHICH THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY RESPONDED NEGATIVELY.

WHAT IS PUZZLING RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT SOURCES IS WHY THE MAIN DETAILS OF THE PLAN HAVE BEEN LEAKED WITHIN DAYS OF THEIR OFFICIAL PRESENTATION.

THE SUSPICION HERE IS THAT THE LEAK WAS DESIGNED TO EMBARRASS MR. SMITH AND HIS GOVERNMENT IN THE CLOSING STAGES OF THE RHODESIAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN WHICH THE RIGHT-WING RHODESIAN ACTION PARTY IS ALREADY ACCUSING THE

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GOVERNMENT OF SELLING OUT TO THE BRITISH AND AMERICANS. BUT THERE IS MYSTIFICATION IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES AS TO WHAT PURPOSE IS BEING SERVED BY SO DOING.

DR. OWEN, THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY, IS EXPECTED

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TO ARRIVE HERE NEXT THURSDAY, THE DAY AFTER THE ELECTION

TO GIVE MR. SMITH THE DETAILED, 8,000-WORD PLAN.

AMONG WHITE RHODESIANS THE PROSPECT OF A BRITISH

ADMINISTRATING-GOVERNOR IS CERTAIN TO BE GREETED WITH

SUSPICION. THE BALD SUGGESTION THAT THE SECURITY FORCES

SHOULD OR COULD BE DISBANDED IS QUITE BEYOND THE PALE IN

THE EYES OF VIRTUALLY ALL WHITES AND A GOOD MANY BLACKS

AS WELL. EQUALLY THE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES OF DISARMING

THE NATIONALIST GUERRILLA FORCES APPEAR INSURMOUNTABLE.

THE GOVERNMENT'S PROMOTION CAMPAIGN FOR AN INTERNAL

SETTLEMENT WAS TAKEN A STAGE FURTHER TODAY WITH THE PRESENTATION

IN THE LOCAL PRESS OF AN INTERVIEW WITH A MAN

SAID TO BE A CAPTURED POLITICAL COMMISSAR OF THE

ZIMBABWE AFRICAN NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY (ZANLA).

IN A SHARP DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL PRACTICE THE

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RHODESIA HERALD WAS ALLOWED TO INTERVIEW THE MAN, NAME

HIM AND PRINT HIS VIEWS. PREDICTABLY, IN THESE CIRCUM-

STANCES, HE SAID THAT IF A POPULAR LEADER EMERGED FROM

FUTURE POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS THERE WAS A GOOD CHANCE

THAT THE "TERRORISTS IN THE FIELD" WOULD ACCEPT HIS

LEADERSHIP AND LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS.

THE CAPTURED POLITICAL COMMISSAR, IDENTIFIED BY HIS

CODENAME, PFUMOREROPA (THE BLOODY SPEAR) CLAIMED THAT

THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND ITS LEADERS, MR. ROBERT MUGABE

AND MR. JOSHUA NKOMO, DID NOT HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE

MEN IN THE FIELD. HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT MANY OF THE

GUERRILLAS WANTED TO RETURN HOME AS SOON AS THEY SET

FOOT IN RHODESIA. THEY WERE ALL HOMESICK BUT MANY WERE

AFRAID OF BEING HANGED.

MEANWHILE, THE REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE, THE AFRICAN

NATIONALIST LEADER, WIDELY REGARDED AS BEING SYMPATHETIC TO AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WITH MR. SMITH, HAS EXPRESSED STRONG RESERVATIONS AT THE GOVERNMENT'S PRESENT INTENTIONS.

HE SAID MR. SMITH'S PLAN WAS "DOOMED TO FAILURE" IF HE INTENDED TO OPEN UP CABINET POSITIONS TO BLACKS ON A RESTRICTED POWER BASIS.

MR. SITHOLE ALSO SAID THAT THE IDEA OF EXCLUDING THE GUERRILLAS FROM THE SECURITY FORCES WAS BOTH "UNREALISTIC AND DISASTROUS". END TEXT

STREATOR

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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